

## THE TWENTY-FIVE BEST RESTAURANTS IN RIVERSIDE



ANCHOS SOUTHWEST GRILL

CAFÉ SEVILLA

CASK 'N CLEAVER STEAKHOUSE

CHICO'S MEXICAN RESTAURANT

CIAO BELLA RISTORANTE

CITRUS CITY GRILLE

CREOLA'S FINE DINING

DUANE'S PRIME STEAKS AND SEAFOOD

FUSION CAFÉ

GERARD'S FRENCH RESTAURANT

GRAPOW THAI RESTAURANT

LAS CAMPANAS RESTAURANT AND CANTINA

LITTLE EMPEROR CHINESE & THAI RESTAURANT

MARIO'S PLACE

MISSION INN RESTAURANT

OLIO'S RISTORANTE

OOKA JAPANESE SUSHI & HIBACHI RESTAURANT

PEKING CHINESE RESTAURANT

RAXX BARBECUE & BREWING CO.

RESTAURANT OMAKASE

RIVERSIDE MARKET BROILER

SIMPLE SIMON'S

TABLE FOR TWO THAI RESTAURANT

TRILUSSA

ZACATECAS CAFÉ



## Riverside's Top 25 Restaurants



# 2007

## The Twenty-Five Best Restaurants in Riverside





Welcome to the 2007 Top 25 Riverside Restaurants Guide.

The Riverside restaurant scene has exploded this year with trendy new restaurants popping up from downtown to Orangecrest, while outstanding traditional fare can be found throughout the city. Each year, my task of picking the best dining spots has gotten harder with the addition of new establishments.

While many national restaurants that are popular appear such as Cheesecake Factory and PF Chang's China Bistro have come to Riverside, I look mostly for the original and locally-owned restaurants that invite guests for a business lunch, celebratory dinner or a warm cozy spot for a quick bite.

Congratulations to the restaurants that made it on Riverside's Top 25 Restaurants list. Thanks to Mayor Loveridge for his inspiration on this project and to Entrepreneurial Hospitality Corporation for the sponsorship of the publication.

I know I probably missed some great dining spots, so for the next book, I invite you to contact me and let me know your favorites that should be considered. My email is [allan@allanborgen.com](mailto:allan@allanborgen.com) or you can call me at (909) 910-3463.

Keep the restaurant guide close by as you explore Riverside's expanding dining opportunities.

Happy Eating!

Allan Borgen  
Food & Restaurant Critic

## Anchos Southwest Grill

(951) 352-0240

10773 Hole Avenue

Type of Cuisine: Southwestern/Mexican

Price Range: \$8.49 to \$18.99

Hours: Sunday – Thursday 11:30 - 9

Friday & Saturday 11:30 - 10

Child Friendly

Disabled Accessible

Full Bar

All Major Credit Cards are Accepted

Anchos is not your typical Mexican restaurant. In fact, the sprawling restaurant specializes in food from the Southwest that is distinctively unique and will make your taste buds jump for joy! All of their delicious items on the menu are made fresh daily on the premises and the meats, fish, and poultry are grilled over mesquite wood. Their salsa made with fresh roasted chilies ranks as one of the best I have ever had and their fresh warm homemade flour tortillas are extremely addicting. The décor is reminiscent of a festive Pueblo-style village and the regional sauces will knock your socks off. Their signature dishes include the delicious Pork Ribs with Chile Ancho BBQ sauce, the mesquite grilled Bacon wrapped Shrimp, the yummy Carne Asada and their sizzling hot Fajitas and Rib Combo. Anchos also caters events and the prices are very reasonable considering the quality and portions of food that you get.



## Café Sevilla

(951) 778-0611

3252 Mission Inn Avenue

Type of Cuisine: Spanish

Hours: Monday – Thursday 5 - 11

Friday & Saturday 5 - Midnight

Sunday 10:30 - 2

Price Range: \$5.75 to \$27.95

Child Friendly

Disabled Accessible

Full Bar

Café Sevilla is a classy, sophisticated yet affordable fine dining restaurant set in a relaxed atmosphere featuring the best from the romantic and culinary rich country of Spain. The large main dining room features high wooden beam ceilings, Spanish pictures and artifacts as well as coat of arm flags and an indoor street mural on one wall, while upstairs is a cozy lounge area where authentic Tapas plates and soft romantic Flamenco music fills the airwaves nightly. Dishes that will make your taste buds dance for joy include the Spanish Cheese & Cold Cuts platter, the Catalan Marinated Chicken Breast, the Grilled Meats Sampler Plate, and the Paella Valenciana. The luscious Dessert Sampler Plate is the perfect ending to a most memorable evening out. In addition to the wonderful Tapas and dinner entrees, Café Sevilla also invites you to a first class Sunday Brunch, as well as live Tango and Flamenco Dinner Shows.

## Cask 'n Cleaver Steakhouse

(951) 682-4580

1333 University Avenue

Type of Cuisine: American/Steakhouse

Hours: Lunch: Monday – Friday 11:30 - 2

Dinner: Monday – Thursday 5 - 9

Sunday 4 - 9

Price Range: Lunch \$6.95 to \$11.50

Dinner \$11.95 to \$28.95

Older Child Friendly

Disabled Accessible

Full Bar

The Cask 'n Cleaver Steakhouse on University Avenue has been serving fine steaks and assorted other selections since 1968 and continues to thrive and evolve. Recently, the large restaurant was totally remodeled and is now more open-looking with an interior centered around "California Casual". Large posters of wine labels adorn the walls while their spanking new 21-seat bar/lounge area is very inviting. On Thursday nights from 9 pm to 2 am, the piano bar comes alive with music and people wanting to relax and unwind. Although the interior has changed, the menu has not. The salad bar is still served with their steak or prime rib entrees and the large selection of award winning wines is still a mainstay of this restaurant. The menu features a nice selection of appetizers, sandwiches, fish and seafood entrees like Crab Crusted Halibut, fresh Charbroiled Salmon and of course their aged Midwestern corn-fed beef steaks including a Mesquite Pepper Steak, the popular 14 oz. Rib Eye Steak, the 22 oz. Porterhouse Steak, and their signature slowly roasted Prime Rib. The Steak & Australian Lobster Tail is also a terrific dish to impress your taste buds or just about anyone who wants to be pampered.



## Chico's Mexican Restaurant

(951) 588-FOOD

9948 Magnolia Avenue

Hours: Monday – Saturday 10 - 8:30

Sunday 9 - 8:30

Price Range: \$5.95 to \$14.95

Child Friendly

Disabled Accessible

No Alcoholic Beverages

Chico's Mexican Restaurant is one of only a handful of Mexican restaurants in our area that specializes in not only good traditional Mexican food, but also very tasty and creative Mexican vegan/vegetarian dishes. The décor is simple and festive while the walls are filled with paintings from local artists giving Chico's its "hip" feel. Some of their signature dishes include their huge and healthy Galactica Salad, the Vegetarian Colorado Wrap, the fantastic Fajitas de La Buena Vista, the delicious Enchiladas Quetzalcoatl and the unique and spicy Fielete Costa Alegre. Whether you like traditional or vegetarian Mexican food, Chico's is a wonderful choice.

## Ciao Bella Ristorante

(951) 781-8840

1630 Spruce Street

Type of Cuisine: Italian

Hours: Monday-Friday 11 - 9

Saturday 5 - 9

Price Range: Lunch: \$7.00 to \$11.00

Dinner: \$10.00 to \$32.00

Disabled Accessible

Full Bar

All Major Credit Cards are Accepted

Ciao Bella's new owners have taken this ultra modern Mediterranean architectural showpiece to a new level making significant changes. For starters, there have been some minor changes in the interior and the exterior landscaping including an outdoor fireplace and fountain. The food has always been good, but now the food is better than ever. There are many pasta, veal, lamb, chicken, fresh seafood and steak and meat dishes to choose from with the Bone in Rib-Eye over a bed of risotto, the Green Garlic Shrimp sautéed in a roasted garlic white wine and fresh herb sauce, the Veal Scallopini, and the house special Veal Osso Bucco leading the way. The wine and martini bar along with a full bar and live music every Thursday, Friday and Saturday only add to the enjoyable meal that awaits your visit.



## Citrus City Grille

(951) 274-9099

3555 Riverside Plaza

Type of Cuisine: Italian/Californian

Hours: Sunday – Thursday 11 - 10

Friday & Saturday 11 - 11

Price Range: Lunch \$9.00 to \$14.00

Dinner \$14.00 to \$35.00

Live music nightly

Older Child Friendly

Disabled Accessible

Full Bar

Located in the Riverside Plaza, Citrus City Grille may be only a couple of years old but has made quite a name for itself since it opened. The interior features bright, multi citrus colored walls and ceilings that give a colorful glimpse to Riverside's rich agricultural past while the Italian and California mix of ingredients and dishes are mouthwatering. They have a large lounge area featuring live music as well as a nice outdoor patio dining area that is great for "people watching" or just to kick back and relax. Some of the exciting dishes offered at Citrus City Grille include Shrimp Scampi Linguini, Prime New York Steak with peppercorn brandy sauce, the Chilean Seabass with lemon grass cream sauce, the Oven-roasted Duck Breast with sun-dried cherry-brandy sauce and the Pot Roast with rosemary demi-glaze. The menu changes daily and the service is very good.

## Creola's Fine Dining

(951) 653-8150

1015 E. Alessandro Boulevard

Type of Cuisine: Continental

Hours: Wednesday-Saturday 5 to 9:30 • Sunday 4 to 8:30

Price Range: \$11.95 to \$17.95

Older Child Friendly • Disabled Accessible

Beer & Wine • All Major Credit Cards are Accepted

Decked out in Floral wallpaper and a variety of country artifacts and pictures, Creola's is a wonderful hidden "gem" of a restaurant that is often overlooked by those yearning for a great meal without having to empty their bank account. The menu offers a tempting array of dishes with a distinct French flair. The French influence comes from the owner's, Creola Riley, French training and her passion for freshness and first class service. Creola's sauces are flawless and each dish is masterfully seasoned. Some of the many favorites of mine include the classic Escargot, the Lamb Shank with Sour Cream Dill, the popular Creola's Meatloaf and the Chicken with a delightful rich sherry cream Swiss cheese sauce. Creola's is a restaurant you really should try.

## Duane's Prime Steaks and Seafood

(951) 341-6767 • (888) 326-4448

3649 Mission Inn Avenue

Type of Cuisine: Steak and Seafood House

Hours: Lunch - Monday - Friday 11:30 - 2

Dinner- Monday - Friday 5:30 - 10 • Saturday 5 - 10

Sunday Brunch 9:30 - 2

Price Range: \$17.00 to \$36.00

Disabled Accessible • Full Bar

Major Credit Cards are Accepted

Reservations are Strongly Recommended

When one thinks of a great steak, Duane's Prime Steaks and Seafood located in The Mission Inn Hotel & Spa is the ultimate dining experience. In addition to winning the AAA Four Diamond award Restaurant and the Golden Scepter Award as voted upon by the Southern California Restaurant Writers, Duane's has received numerous other prestigious awards. As are all of the restaurants located in the Mission Inn, Duane's is a beautiful and elegant restaurant where food and service makes your dining experience special.

Duane's specializes in Prime Beef and the juicy 25-oz. Rib Chop, the 12 oz. Lamb Chops, the delicious Chateaubriand for Two and the impressive 20 oz. Porterhouse Steak are just a few of many of their great steaks they offer. They also have some excellent seafood choices for those wanting more than steaks.

The first class quality of the food along with the whole "Mission Inn Experience" makes Duane's my pick for the number one dining spot in Riverside for the fourth consecutive year. Executive Chef Victor Juarez and his talented kitchen staff continue to dish out some of the best food around in a setting fit for a King. Don't forget to allow yourself plenty of time after dinner to walk around and discover the many sights and "hidden treasures" that the Mission Inn offers in this magnificent hotel and resort.

## Fusion Café

(951) 653-4142

1355 E. Alessandro Boulevard

Type of Cuisine: Contemporary

Hours: Tuesday - Thursday 5 - 9

Friday & Saturday 5 - 10

Sunday 4 - 9

Price Range: \$7.95 to \$19.95

Child Friendly

Disabled Accessible

No Alcoholic Beverages

Major Credit Cards are Accepted

Catering is Offered

Fusion Café is one of those "hidden gems" that not everyone is familiar with but features some creative dishes from around the world. Each dish is perfectly seasoned and the choices are endless. The restaurant is decorated in contemporary Californian décor along with an open kitchen to see your food being prepared. The menu features a variety of great appetizers like the Chipotle Seasoned Chicken Fusion Nachos and salads like the grilled fresh fruit laden Paradise Chicken Salad. The Fusion Burger with caramelized onions and Cheddar cheese served on grilled Parmesan sourdough bread is fantastic as is the Prime Rib (Friday and Saturday only), the delicious Seared Salmon with Roasted Bell Pepper Sauce and the creamy Shrimp Alfredo. Every week-end is special at Fusion's because they offer ethnic dishes from around the world. This is a great place to take the entire family and is a cut above other family restaurants in our area.

## Gerard's French Restaurant

(951) 687-4882

9814 Magnolia Avenue

Type of Cuisine: French/Continental

Hours: Tuesday-Sunday 5-9 Dinner Only

Price Range: Dinner \$17.95 to \$32.95

Disabled Accessible

Beer & Wine

All Major Credit Cards are Accepted

Gerard's French restaurant is one of the original fine dining restaurants that has withstood the many changes Riverside has experienced the past few years and remains one of the best French Restaurant in the region. In addition to a fine selection of Veal, Beef, Poultry and fresh Seafood dishes, Gerard's also offers many nightly specials that are exciting and oh so delicious! The charming cottage ambiance along with formal table settings makes for a most memorable dining experience. Some of the classic dishes that have made Gerard's a Riverside institution include their classic Veal Oscar, the Rack of Lamb, the delicious Braised Rabbit cooked in a stunning white grain mustard, thyme, crème and white wine sauce, the popular Steak Poivre and sautéed Sweetbreads. They also have an outstanding wine list and vegetarian dishes. The entire experience will surely leave you both relaxed and very satisfied.

## Grapow Thai Restaurant

(951) 780-1132

497 Alessandro Boulevard

Type of Cuisine: Thai

Hours: Sunday-Thursday 11 - 9

Friday & Saturday 11 - 10

Price Range \$4.50 to \$15.50

Child Friendly

Disabled Accessible

Beer and Wine

Grapow is a beautiful new restaurant offering some truly visually dramatic and delicious Thai dishes in an atmosphere that can best be described as casual Asian elegance. The modern Asian influenced sage green and copper colored walls, soft and bright paintings and pictures, and a large open kitchen are just a few of the many beautiful design features that help create a most relaxing dining experience. Dishes like the Kings Fried Rice, Eight Warriors, Thai Salmon, BBQ Thai Chicken, and the impressive Gra Pow Hot Plate are just some of the many terrific dishes. Grapow may be a new restaurant, but Patrick Surachutikarn, who you may recognize from Table For Two Thai Restaurant in Riverside, is the owner/chef who really knows how to bring Thai food to a new and exciting level and I expect big things from him in the coming years.

## Las Campañas Restaurant and Cantina

(951) 341-6767

3649 Mission Inn Avenue

Type of Cuisine: Mexican

Hours: Lunch & Dinner Monday – Thursday 11 - 9

Friday & Saturday 11 - 10

Sunday Brunch 9:30 - 2

Sunday Dinner 4 - 9

Price Range: Lunch \$9.95 to \$19.95

Dinner \$13.95 to \$29.95

Older Child Friendly

Disabled Accessible

Full Bar

Major Credit Cards are Accepted

Las Campañas restaurant is an outstanding Mexican restaurant located in the beautiful outdoor garden area just outside the presidential lounge of The Mission Inn Hotel & Spa. The tranquil sounds of water trickling down from various water fountains and the beautiful tropical lush green foliage makes Las Campañas the perfect dining destination for some truly delicious Mexican food. The fresh Chili Rellenos, the zesty Chile Verde, the flavor charged Carnitas, the crab and shrimp stuffed Enchiladas are great choices. Don't forget to try one of their signature (and huge) Margaritas. I hate to repeat myself but I will in this case, so don't forget to allow yourself plenty of time after lunch or dinner to walk around the beautiful Mission Inn and discover what makes this one of a kind property so special.

## Little Emperor Chinese

### & Thai Restaurant

(951) 683-1678

5225 Canyon Crest Drive

Hours: Monday – Friday 11:30 - 9:30

Saturday Noon - 9:30 • Sunday Noon - 9

Price Range: Dinner \$6.95 to \$13.95 • Lunch \$6.25 to \$7.25

Child Friendly • Disabled Accessible • Beer and Wine

The Little Emperor restaurant, located in the Canyon Crest Center is a small, quaint bistro-like restaurant that serves both traditional Chinese and Thai dishes as well as a large assortment of some delicious vegetarian entrees. From the Thai section of the menu, I recommend the Thai Coconut Soup, Thai Gourmet Pork and the popular Pad Thai Noodles while some great Chinese dishes include the Hunan Seafood, the delicious Shanghai Style Fish, and Chinese Hot Pot Chicken, the house specialty Fire Cracker Beef. Open for 17 years, the Little Emperor is a nice place to relax and dine on some flavorful Asian dishes.



## Mario's Place

(951) 684-7755

3646 Mission Inn Avenue

Type of Cuisine: Northern Contemporary Italian

Hours: Lunch - Thursday & Friday 11:30 - 2:30

Dinner- Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday 5:30 - 9:30

Thursday, Friday & Saturday 5:30 - 11:00

Price Range: Lunch \$9.75 to \$18.00

Dinner \$10.50 to \$33.00

Older Child Friendly

Disabled Accessible • Full Bar

Major Credit Cards are Accepted

Entertainment:

Live Jazz Every Friday & Saturday nights from 10 - 1

Mario's Place, one of the original "fine dining" restaurants in Riverside, is certainly one of the most inspiring and exciting restaurants in Riverside and in the region.

Their creative Northern Italian dishes, with touches of Southern France thrown in, are delicious and the presentations are beautiful. The restaurant has won many awards for their extraordinary tasting food and their extensive wine list, and continues to dazzle their customers with some of the best food around. Owner/Chef Leone Palagi and his brothers have created a beautiful "hip", elegant yet relaxing restaurant with a multitude of seating options including a handsomely appointed dining room, a neat outdoor patio area, and various small intimate banquet rooms. Some of the many dishes that will bring you back again and again include their Butternut Squash Ravioli with a sage butter shiitake mushroom sauce, Pan Roasted Colorado Lamb Chops, the Scottish Salmon "al Cartoccio" cooked in parchment envelope, the Grilled Swordfish and the Risotto of Porcini Mushrooms. Dining at Mario's Place is truly a great culinary experience.

## Mission Inn Restaurant

(951) 341-6767

3649 Mission Inn Avenue

Type of Cuisine: Continental

Hours: Breakfast -

Monday – Saturday 6:30 - 10:30 • Sunday 6:30 - 8:30

Lunch: Monday – Saturday 11 - 3:30 (Lunch Buffet 11 - 2)

Dinner: Monday – Saturday 4 - 10 (Saturday Buffet 5:30 - 9)

Sunday 5 - 10 (Sunday Buffet Brunch 9:30 - 2)

Price Range: Breakfast \$5.75 to \$15.50

Lunch \$9.25 to \$16.95 • Dinner \$15.25 to \$26.00

Sunday Buffet Brunch \$32 for adults, \$15 for children

The Mission Inn Restaurant has undergone extensive changes in their main dining room and more exciting changes are on the way in 2007. The large main dining room is set in charming Spanish décor complete with spectacular tiles while the Spanish style castle patio courtyards invites all to dine 'al fresco' under the sun or stars amongst the tranquility of beautiful plants, shrubs and flowers. The menu is fresh and exciting featuring a tempting variety of breakfast, lunch, and dinner entrees each prepared with style and special attention to taste. Some of the many great dishes the Mission Inn Restaurant has to offer include the Penne Athena, Kelly's Spa Chicken, Beef Tips Stroganoff, the Seafood Ravioli, and the Jumbo Prawn Pappardelle. If you enjoy Prime Rib as much as I do, you must go to their Saturday night "all you can eat" buffet that includes their signature "Prime" Prime Rib along with other delicious hot entrees, as well as a nice array of salads, cheeses, smoked salmon, fresh oysters and a decadent dessert table. Make sure you allow time to see "all" of the Mission Inn.

## Olio's Ristorante

(951) 786-7147

3400 Market Street • The Marriott Hotel

Type of Cuisine: Italian/Continental/Californian

Hours: Open 7 days a week

Breakfast 6 - 11 • Lunch 11 - 2 • Dinner 5 - 10

Price Range: Breakfast \$5.99 to \$11.95

for their All American Breakfast Buffet

Lunch \$8.50 to \$16.00 • Dinner \$11.00 to \$29.00

Older Child Friendly • Disabled Accessible • Full Bar

Martini's Bar & Lounge features over 200 Martinis

Major Credit Cards are Accepted

Olio's Ristorante is located in the Marriott Hotel in downtown Riverside and features a nice selection of fresh Northern and Southern Italian dishes that includes some excellent pasta, salads, steak, chicken, and seafood entrees. Executive Chef Louis Martinez oversees the menu so you know that the quality of each dish will be high. This nicely appointed Californian Contemporary restaurant featuring Tuscany style art is open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. The service is friendly and accommodating and they feature a nice selection of wines. Some of the best dishes include their signature Salmon Florentine with pesto cream sauce, the Porcini Filet Mignon Steak with porcini demi glace and garlic rosemary red potatoes, the Fettuccini Quattro Formaggi with cheese Alfredo sauce and the Olio's New York Steak with onions, peppers and mushrooms. Their breakfast buffet is both very satisfying and oh so good.

## Ooka Japanese Sushi

## & Hibachi Restaurant

(951) 779-0099

3525 Riverside Plaza Drive

Type of Cuisine: Japanese

Hours: Lunch Monday – Friday 11:30 - 3

Dinner Monday – Thursday 5:30 - 9:30

Friday 5:30 - 11:00

Saturday 1 - 11:00

Sunday 1 - 10

Price Range: Lunch \$9.00 to \$13.00

Dinner \$12.00 to \$29.00

Older Child Friendly • Disabled Accessible

In its second year of operation, Ooka Japanese restaurant remains one of the best Japanese restaurants in Riverside. The menu features a wonderful selection of traditional Japanese favorites like 10 varieties of teriyaki items, many a Tempura dinners, noodle dishes and Katsu plates along with some great appetizers like Foie Gras Ooke Style, the cleaver Sashimi Parfait with three types of fish, the zesty Jalapeno White Tuna and the delicious Black Cod with Miso. In addition to terrific main entrees, the sushi served here is fresh and exciting. Some of my favorite sushi items include the signature Ooka Shrimp Tempura Roll with Eel and Avocado, the Lobster Tempura Roll with Smoked Salmon and Avocado, the terrific Hot Fancy Roll with seared pepper salmon, spicy tuna and the unique Purple Roll covered with Grilled Marinade eggplant. I am happy to see that Ooka has kept the quality of their food and their service to the level it was when they first opened.

## Peking Chinese Restaurant

(951) 687-4822

11170 Magnolia Avenue

Type of Cuisine: Chinese

Hours: Sunday – Thursday 11 - 9

Friday & Saturday 11 - 10

Price Range: \$6.75 to \$16.95

Child Friendly

Disabled Accessible

Beer & Wine

The Peking Chinese Restaurant is a wonderful restaurant serving some of the best Chinese food in our area and the kind of small neighborhood restaurant you don't want to share with anyone else. Two well-kept fish aquariums greet you while the aromas of ginger, garlic and other aromatic ingredients fill the small but quaint dining room and small banquet room. Some of the many tasty Chinese dishes that I love include the popular Three Flavor Hot Noodle Soup with hand-made noodles, the Magnificent Blue Crab Plate, the Sautéed Happy Family meal, and the unusual but delicious Combination Cold Plate. The Sweet and Sour Crispy Beef is also a dish worth trying. In addition to winning many awards, the Peking Chinese Restaurant is a very popular dining spot for our local Asian community.

## Raxx Barbecue & Brewing Co.

(951) 784-2739

3397 Mission Inn Avenue

Type of Cuisine: American/Barbecue

Hours: Open daily 11 - 10

Price Range: \$9.99 to \$19.99

Child Friendly • Disabled Accessible • Full Bar

Entertainment is featured on Saturdays (jazz or blues)  
and on Sundays (folk music)

Raxx Barbecue & Brewing Co. has transformed the previous Riverside Brewing site into a first class restaurant and Riverside should be glad they are in our city. As you enter, you are greeted by a large stainless steel smoker using hickory, apple, and oak wood to slow cook ribs, brisket, chicken, and pork. As you look to the right, there is a large bar and lounge area along with lots of brewing tanks that brew six varieties of beer. If you look to the left, you will see a large dining room with tables, booths, and walls covered with some neat signs, posters, and pictures of food items, blues musicians, and other nostalgic stuff to help get you into the BBQ mood. Some of the impressive items on the menu include the Sampler Appetizer Platter, the Pulled Pork Sandwich, Tri-Tip Salad, and the massive Good Times Platter with all kinds of choices of ribs, brisket, chicken, pulled pork and their wonderful smoked Bacon Wrapped Shrimp with Jalapenos. Raxx Barbecue & Brewing Co. can also cater events at your location or in their large patio area.

## Restaurant Omakase

(951) 788-8820

3720 Mission Inn Avenue

Type of Cuisine: French/Japanese

Hours: Monday-Saturday 11 - 3 and 5 - 10

Price Range: Lunch \$9.00 to \$16.00 • Dinner \$19.00 to \$25.00

Disabled Accessible • Beer and Wine

Restaurant Omakase is a new, stylish and sophisticated restaurant that has burst upon the fine dining scene in Riverside that is being recognized by other critics in regional magazines. This upscale little restaurant offers some of the most intriguing, visually stunning and delectable dishes in Riverside and the region for that matter. The lemon and lime colored walls and candlelit mahogany tables set the tone for the magnificent Japanese French infused dishes that owner chef Brein Clements and his very talented kitchen staff creates in the small but modern kitchen. Using fresh and organic ingredients grown locally, Omakase is a restaurant that must be experienced! The menu changes monthly based on the freshest seasonal ingredients available and features a myriad of creative appetizers, entrees, and desserts each designed to impress and dazzle all of your senses. For those who really appreciate fine food, the chef tastes menu features seasonal and spontaneous selections paired with wines. Choose from five, eight and 10 course food and wine tasting pairings that range in price from \$85.00 for the 5-course food and wine tasting to the \$170 10-course food and wine tasting pairings. Why travel to Napa Valley for fine food and wines, when we have Omakase?

## Riverside Market Broiler

(951) 276-9007

3525 Merrill Street

Type of Cuisine: Seafood

Hours: Sunday – Thursday 11 - 10

Friday & Saturday 11 - 11

Price Range: Lunch: \$6.95 to \$9.95

Dinner: \$8.95 to \$23.95 (some items are priced on a daily basis)

Child Friendly

Disabled Accessible • Full Bar

Major Credit Cards are Accepted

The Riverside Market Broiler is the only restaurant in Riverside that specializes in fresh fish and seafood dishes. Sure they also serve steaks with a sampling of chicken and pasta dishes but it's the seafood that is the main attraction. In addition to dining in their large dining room, you can also purchase fresh fish from their retail seafood counter. The menu offers many "design your own" combination plates featuring a nice selection of fish, seafood, chicken, ribs and steak from which to choose. If you like variety, your fish can be seasoned in a number of ways at no additional cost and most of the items are grilled over mesquite wood and come with some marvelous side dishes. Some of the many items that won't disappoint include the Chilean Sea Bass, the crispy Deep Fried Oysters, the boneless Rainbow Trout, the spicy Louisiana Catfish, the Brandy Flashed Chicken and the N.Y. Steak & Gulf Shrimp.

## Simple Simon's

(951) 369-6030

3639 Main Street

Type of Cuisine: American Sandwiches,  
Salads & Baked Goods

Hours: Monday – Friday 7 - 4 (breakfast till 10:30)

Saturday 7:30 - 4 (breakfast till 11)

Price Range: \$5.25 to \$8.50

Child Friendly

Disabled Accessible

Beer & Wine

Simple Simon's is located in downtown Riverside across from The Mission Inn Hotel & Spa and is a charming restaurant and bakery that serves some of the best salads, sandwiches, Artesian breads, pastries, cakes and other delectable deserts and side dishes in Riverside. What makes Simple Simon's items so good is their use of fresh ingredients, attention to detail and the owner's passion for quality and consistency. Some of their wonderful breakfast items include the Winter Omelet with gorgonzola cheese, onions, pecans and apples and their Homemade Granola, while the Chicken Apple Sausage on Focaccia bread with gouda cheese, the Roast Lamb with grilled eggplant, feta cheese and tomato fennel olive sauce and their vegetarian Mediterranean Melt remain their signature entrees. Make sure you save room for one of their decadent desserts. Whether you dine indoors or outdoors in their spacious patio area, you will love Simple Simon's.

## Table for Two Thai Restaurant

(951) 683-3648

3600 Central Avenue

Type of Cuisine: Thai

Hours: Monday-Thursday 11 - 9

Friday & Saturday 11 - 10

Sunday 11 - 9

Price Range: Lunch: \$4.95 to \$8.50

Dinner \$7.95 to \$15.75

Child Friendly

Disabled Accessible

Beer & Wine

All Major Credit Cards are Accepted

Table for Two continues to be one of the premier Thai restaurants in Riverside. The décor is trendy, and contemporary in design while the food is outstanding. The lunch and dinner menus features classic, as well as original Thai dishes that will dazzle you and your taste buds with plate presentations that are beautiful and portions that are sizable. Some of the most popular dishes include the Grilled NY Steak and Shrimp, the Spicy Bamboo Shoots with Chicken, Stir Fried Serrano Chili Shrimps and the Pineapple Roasted Duck. Other favorites of mine are the stuffed Golden Angel Wings, the Green Curry Shrimp, the Garlic Pepper Pork and their Roasted Pork Soup. Riverside has many good Thai restaurants and this one is certainly one of the top picks.



## Trilussa

(951) 683-3494

3737 Main Street

Type of Cuisine: Italian

Hours: Lunch: Monday-Friday 11 - 4

Dinner: 4 to closing

Saturday & Sunday 3 to closing

Price Range: Lunch: \$6.99 to \$11.95

Diner: \$14.95 to \$38.00

Disabled Accessible

Full Bar

Trilussa, named after a Roman poet who loved food and would write a poem whenever he was short on money, is one of the newest restaurants to open up in Riverside and occupies an old bank building near City Hall. The main dining room is spacious and elegant and the converted bank vault is now a classy little bar with a small seating area for small banquets or parties. A large patio area allows one to relax and dine outdoors. The menu features traditional Italian and Continental dishes including such popular items as the Risotto Pescatora, the impressive Osso Buco, the tangy Sole al Limone and the tasty Petto di Pollo Caprese. They also offer exciting wild game such as Elk and Venison. I expect some big things from this new and upscale restaurant in the coming year.

## Zacatecas Café

(951) 683-3939

2472 University Avenue – University

Hours: Saturday, Sunday & Monday 8 - 3

Tuesday thru Friday 8 - 8

Price Range: Breakfast \$5.00 to \$7.50

Lunch \$3.00 to \$5.75

Dinner \$ \$3.00 to \$10.00

Child Friendly

Disabled Accessible

Beer and Wine is Served

Open since 1963, Zacatecas is definitely a Mexican food aficionado's dream come true. The menu features a variety of some very tasty traditional as well as some original Mexican dishes that are outstanding. A warm cup of their signature Colorado sauce and some crispy warm tortilla chips set the tone for a special dining experience. Some of the many dishes that deserve your attention include the Huevos con Nopales, the Mole de Gallina, the hefty Carne Asada Torta sandwich and the Chile Colorado Dinner Plate. Believe it or not, the special Deluxe Cheese Burger is another terrific dish to consider.

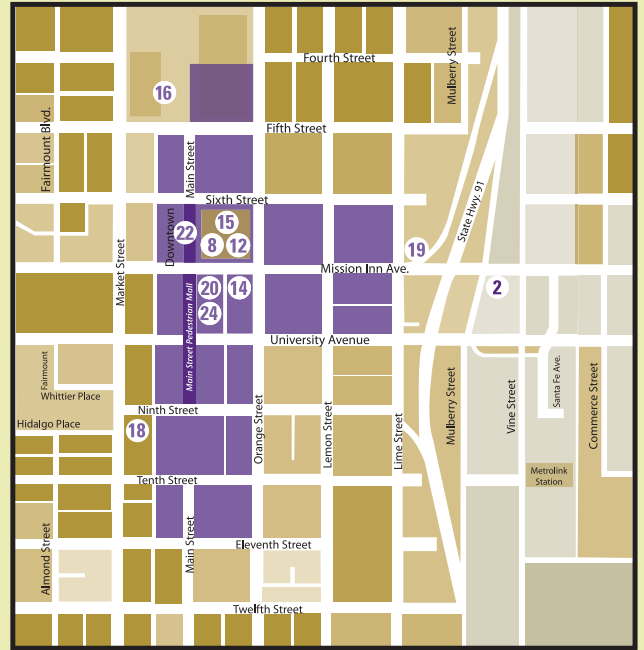
(I still can't believe that I ordered a burger in a Mexican restaurant...but boy, am I glad I did!). You will not go wrong with Zacatecas!



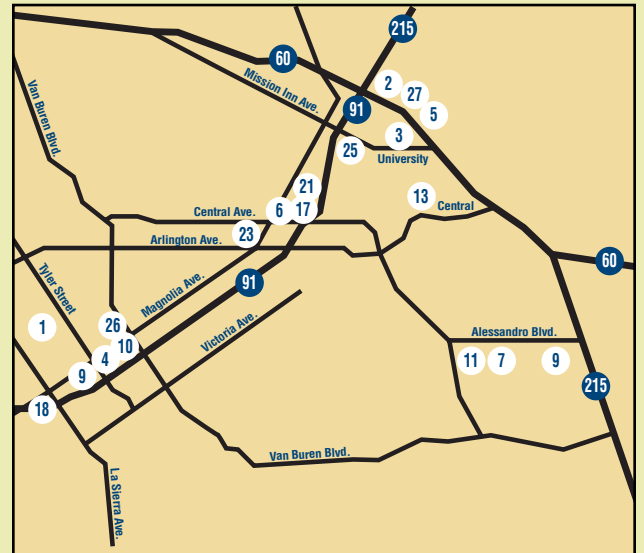
# Finding Riverside's Top 25 Restaurants 2007

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## Downtown Area Restaurants



## Riverside Area Restaurants



## NOTES

[illegible]

## NOTES

[illegible]



### About Allan Borgen

Allan Borgen has been a restaurant critic for more than 20 years. He has seven years experience working in various restaurants in Los Angeles and has taken chef's training and restaurant management classes.

For the past 18 years, Allan has produced and hosted the "Let's Dine Out Show." He is also the Restaurant Critic for the *Inland Valley Daily Bulletin* and the *San Bernardino Sun* newspapers and is a member of the Southern California Restaurant Writers Association.

Let's Dine Out Show

Ch. 24, KVCR-PBS

Thursday 7:30 pm & Midnight

Saturday 7 pm & Sunday 1 pm

[allan@allanborgen.com](mailto:allan@allanborgen.com)



You can't have a successful twenty-first century city without an ample selection of great restaurants. Dining choices are key to the quality of life in a city and, as Mayor, I am proud that our City welcomes top quality national restaurants while retaining unique local restaurants.

Four years ago, I wanted to find a way to explore and celebrate Riverside's unique restaurant scene and I found a willing partner in Ted Weggeland of the Entrepreneurial Hospitality Corporation. We wanted a professional, objective view so we contacted Inland Empire's food and restaurant critic Allan Borgen asking him to sample what Riverside has to offer and put together a snapshot of the best of Riverside's burgeoning restaurant offerings.

As the Renaissance in Riverside creates transformative change in our community, Riverside's Top 25 Restaurants guide will help you navigate among the many dining choices. I am glad to say that I have enjoyed a terrific meal or two at almost every restaurant in the brochure, and I hope you will do the same!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Ron Loveridge". The signature is stylized with a large, flowing "R" and "L".

Ron Loveridge  
Mayor

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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[WWW.RIVERSIDECALGOV](http://WWW.RIVERSIDECALGOV)**

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